

Groups and individuals continue to meet with the Governor's Policy Office and/or submitted letters to the Governor expressing their views on the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline. On balance, we are receiving many more contacts from opponents than proponents.

DEQ expects to issue a determination on a key water quality permit around the beginning of November (nonpublic timeline). Given this timing and the attention around the pipeline, it is worth considering stakeholder meeting with the Governor by the end of September, such as a meeting with a handful of community activists.

Pipeline Proponents

Only a few groups have expressed support to the Policy Office for the ACP (e.g., Farm Bureau, N.C. East Alliance, and Northampton County manager). They favor the pipeline for the following reasons:

- Increased tax base will alleviate the tax burden for homeowners
- Creation of construction jobs
- Natural gas availability will attract industry
- Distributed natural gas to farms and residences would allow owners to switch from high-cost propane

Pipeline Opponents

Opponents to the ACP think the ACP is unnecessary, would result in negative economic and environmental impacts, and would have disproportionate negative effects on people of color and low-income residents. I have attached a letter signed by 13 organizations that succinctly conveys their arguments and sentiments regarding the ACP. Opponents include Sierra Club, NC WARN, NAACP, SELC, Clean Water for North Carolina, and many community groups from impacted counties.

In general, ACP opponents raise the following specific concerns:

Insufficient Demand—Duke Energy and Dominion have not demonstrated sufficient future natural gas demand to warrant a natural gas pipeline, especially one this large. Electricity BAU demand projections are flat, and demand will decline with additional energy efficiency programs. FERC's assessment of need is based upon whether there are contracts for future gas supplies, not an overall analysis of projected energy needs.

Higher Electricity Costs—Overbuilding pipeline capacity will result in higher electricity rates to pay off the unnecessary ACP. Higher electricity rates are bad for residential, commercial, and industrial customers.

Undermine Clean Energy—Constructing natural gas pipeline with excess capacity tips the scales in favor of new natural gas plants compared to new renewable energy projects. Once natural gas capacity is built, there will be an inclination to build new gas-fired power plants to use the capacity, rather than pursue new solar or wind projects.

Duke Energy ROI—Building and overbuilding natural gas pipeline capacity is in Duke Energy's interest because it gets ROI on capital projects.

Air Emissions / Climate Change—The pipeline and compression station will leak methane and VOCs, which harm public health and accelerate climate change. In addition, locking in this natural gas supply will put a thumb on the scale for new fossil power plants, further contributing to climate change.

Water Quality / Wetlands—The ACP could lead to leaking liquids (blasting chemicals, fuels, and natural gas liquids) during and after construction. Leaks can harm well water, water bodies, and wetlands. The ACP route also crosses sensitive waterways. Further, its construction risks sedimentation and erosion into rivers and wetlands.

Environmental Justice—The ACP imposes health, environmental, and economic risk on vulnerable populations with a history being subjected to such risks. Seven of the eight counties on the pipeline's path have a higher percentage of people of color than the state average. A disproportionate number of North Carolina's Native American populations live along the ACP route.

No/Minimal Economic Benefit—The ACP will create few long-term jobs, and construction jobs will not necessarily be filled by locals. Further, the transmission pipeline will not provide for affordable natural gas distribution to residents and businesses.

Noise Pollution—The compressor station in Northampton Country will create constant noise pollution for neighboring residents.

Public Safety—In 7 counties along the NC route, there are 24 High Consequence Areas—areas with at least 20 buildings or particularly vulnerable populations (e.g., daycare centers and retirement homes) within a hazardous distance from the pipeline. Also, recent pipeline explosions indicate that the blast zone—distance at which there is a reasonable risk of injury or death—should extend 43% further from the pipeline than Dominion assumed, meaning more communities are at risk than previously identified.

Property Rights—Property owners object to the use of eminent domain in order to support the construction of an unnecessary pipeline.